

News from the National League of Cities

www.nlc.org

www.nlctv.org

www.citiesspeak.org

www.twitter.com/leagueofcities

www.facebook.com/nationalleagueofcities

For Immediate Release

October 3, 2011

Contact

Amanda Straub

202-626-3015

Straub@nlc.org

Gregory Minchak

202-626-3003

Minchak@nlc.org

New Report Highlights 27 Advanced Citywide Afterschool Systems

Cities Making Fundamental Shift to Coordinated Approaches

Washington, DC – The National League of Cities (NLC) Institute for Youth, Education and Families, with support from The Wallace Foundation, released new findings today highlighting progress in 27 major U.S. cities in building local afterschool systems.

The report, “Municipal Leadership for Afterschool: Citywide Approaches Spreading Across the Country,” documents a growing nationwide trend in which municipal leaders are transforming local afterschool opportunities for children and youth by taking a more coordinated approach. The cities highlighted in the report are making a fundamental shift from managing and funding individual afterschool programs to building more comprehensive, citywide systems that engage city, school and non-profit providers.

The report is available online from [NLC](http://www.nlc.org) and [The Wallace Foundation](http://www.wallacefoundation.org).

Media are invited to participate in a webinar discussing the report on October 12 at 2:00pm Eastern Time. For more information or to RSVP, contact Amanda Straub at 202-626-3015 or Straub@nlc.org.

The 27 cities highlighted are:

- Alexandria, Va.
- Atlanta, Ga.
- Baltimore, Md.
- Boise, Idaho
- Bridgeport, Conn.
- Charlotte, N.C.
- Charleston, S.C.
- Cleveland, Ohio
- Denver, Colo.
- Fort Worth, Texas
- Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Jacksonville, Fla.
- Louisville, Ky.
- Nashville, Tenn.
- New Orleans, La.

- Newark, N.J.
- Oakland, Calif.
- Omaha, Neb.
- Philadelphia, Pa.
- Portland, Ore.
- Rochester, N.Y.
- San Francisco, Calif.
- Spokane, Wash.
- St. Louis, Mo.
- St. Paul, Minn.
- Seattle, Wash.
- Tampa, Fla.

“These cities demonstrate how a coordinated approach to afterschool programming can help young people gain access to a wide variety of high-quality programs,” said Clifford M. Johnson, executive director of NLC’s Institute for Youth, Education and Families. “Despite major economic and fiscal challenges, cities continue to show commitment to afterschool programming because they see firsthand the enormous benefits it brings to the safety and well-being of their residents and communities.”

Numerous studies show that high-quality afterschool programs can contribute to better school attendance, raise graduation rates and reduce the likelihood that young people will smoke, drink, use drugs or engage in sexual activity. Additionally, these programs help cities reduce juvenile crime, promote healthy lifestyles and address childhood obesity and build an educated and skilled workforce for the community.

“RAND’s *Hours of Opportunity* study shows that city efforts to collect data on after-school participation and set quality standards pay off in improved quality and access,” said Nancy Devine, director of communities at The Wallace Foundation. “We hope this important National League of Cities study documenting the growing number of cities developing these coordinated approaches inspires others to learn from their experiences.”

The report is a culmination of extensive surveys and interviews and adds to a growing body of research funded by The Wallace Foundation, including [RAND Education’s Hours of Opportunity study](#) of five cities that improved afterschool participation and program quality and a [Public/Private Ventures](#) evaluation of the Providence, R.I., AfterZones initiative, which linked participation with higher school attendance.

NLC, in partnership with The Wallace Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, has worked with hundreds of cities for more than a decade to build knowledge, promote cross-city learning and assist local leaders in developing coordinated approaches to afterschool systems. Selection of cities included in this report was based on a framework developed by The Wallace Foundation which outlines six key elements for sustaining a coordinated afterschool system: committed leadership, a public or private coordinating entity, a multi-year plan, reliable information, expanding participation and a commitment to quality.

Find out more about work on afterschool programming from the [NLC’s Institute for Youth, Education and Families](#) and the [Wallace Foundation](#).

The National League of Cities is the nation’s oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership and governance. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans.

The Wallace Foundation is an independent, national foundation dedicated to supporting and sharing effective ideas and practices that expand learning and enrichment opportunities for all people. Its three current objectives are: strengthening education leadership to improve student achievement; enhancing out-of-school learning opportunities; and building appreciation and demand for the arts.

###